



The Parables of Jesus

FEBRUARY 4, 2024

No matter who you are,
No matter where you are
On life's journey,
You are welcome here.

Please silence cell phones.

Bibles for use during worship are available at each entrance to the Sanctuary.

PRELUDE

"It's the Parables"

Original by Barry Manilow

(Based on "It's a Miracle")

and Marty Panzer

*Kecia Waldschmidt with St. Arbucks Quartet Adapted by Jana O'Brien
and Breanna Coe & Jana O'Brien, back-up vocals*

*In Israel of Jesus' origin
The cities and towns He was in
From Nazareth to Hazor,
and every town in between
The people, they all knew His name
As the Word of our God he'd proclaim
He told stories in simple ways
That taught us what to believe...*

*We'll learn of the small mustard seed,
The Samaritan who did a good deed,
The Prodigal Children who
returned to their mom and dad,
The dinner invitation denied,
The rich man whose grain was supplied,
The house's foundation
whose strength was so ironclad...*

*It's the parables
Those stories shareable
With lessons pure and true
Human fables told back in the days of olde,
To help God's lessons shine on through,
Now we're here in the 21st Century
Today there will be dancin' in the street
For the parables
The stories shareable,
The parables for you!*

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With lessons pure and true
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WELCOME

Matt Fitzgerald

* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In the beginning was the Word.

All: And the Word was God.

One: And the Word became flesh and lived among us,

All: Full of grace and truth.

One: God, open our eyes to see your truth.

All: Open our ears, to hear a fresh word from you.

* OPENING HYMN

I Love to Tell the Story

1. I love to tell the sto - ry Of un - seen things a - bove,
2. I love to tell the sto - ry, For those who know it best

Of Je - sus and his glo - ry, Of Je - sus and his love.
Seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing To hear it, like the rest.

I love to tell the sto - ry, Be - cause I know it's true;
And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,

It sat - is - fies my long - ings As noth - ing else would do.
'Twill be the old, old sto - ry That I have loved so long.

I love to tell the sto - ry; 'Twill be my theme in glo - ry

To tell the old, old sto - ry Of Je - sus and his love.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Liz Nickerson

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.**

** Please stand if you are able.*

The Parables of Jesus

The Parable Prologue

> **God and Jesus' Most Beloved Followers**

**God
Mary Magdalene
and Simon Peter**

> **The Entry of the Flock**

**The Good Shepherd
The 100 Sheep**

Parable 1: *The Parable of the Mustard Seed*

"The Itsy Bitsy Mustard Seed"
(based on "The Itsy Bitsy Spider")
Traditional Children's Song
New Lyrics by Breanna Coe
The Mustard Seeds and Birds

Interlude: *The Search for the Lost Sheep*

Parable 2: *The Parable of the Prodigal Children*

"Take the Money and Run"
Original by The Steve Miller Band
New Lyrics by Jana O'Brien
The Prodigal Daughters
and the Money Runners

"I Knew You Were Trouble"
Original by Taylor Swift
New lyrics by Kecia Waldschmidt
The Dutiful Daughters
and the Swifties

"Welcome Back"
Original by John Sebastian
New Lyrics by Jana O'Brien
The Prodigal Parents
and the Welcome Back Brigade

Interlude: *The Search for the Lost Sheep*

Parable 3: *The Parable of the Rich Fool*

“Rich Fool”

Based on “Rich Girl”

Original by Hall & Oates

New Lyrics by Kecia Waldschmidt

The Angels With Attitude and the Rich Fool

INTERMISSION:

Offertory

“Teach Your Children Well”

Original by Crosby, Stills, & Nash

New Lyrics by Jana O’Brien

St. Arbucks Quartet

Kris Hansen, Todd Coe and Breanna Coe, Vocalists

ACT II:

Interlude: *The Search for the Lost Sheep*

Parable 4: *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*

“Just Stuff It!”

Based on “I Love It”

Original by Icona Pop

New Lyrics by Kecia Waldschmidt

The Devilish Dudes

“These Boots are Made for Walking”

Original by Nancy Sinatra

New Lyrics by Jana O’Brien

The Go-Go By-ers

“You Can Count on Me”

Original by Bruno Mars

Minor lyric adaptation by Jana O’Brien

The Good Samaritan, the Traveling Migrant, the Innkeeper, and the Nurses

Interlude: *The Search for the Lost Sheep*

Parable 5: *The Parable of the Banquet*

"I'm So Busy"
(based on "I Feel Pretty")
Original by Bernstein & Sondheim
from "West Side Story"
New Lyrics by Jana O'Brien
The Too-Busy Bees

"Please Come! Please Come!"
(based on "Padam Padam")
Original by Kylie Minogue
New Lyrics by Jana O'Brien
The Party Padam-ers

Interlude: *The Search for the Lost Sheep*

Parable 6: *The Parable of the Strong Foundation*

"Bones"
Original by Maren Morris
New Lyrics by Jana O'Brien
The Barbie Builder Music Ensemble
and The Barbie Builders

Interlude: *The Lost Sheep Is Found*

The Good Shepherd
and Sheep #100

Finale:

"The Stories of Our Lord"
(based on "The Story of My Life")
Original by One Direction
New Lyrics Jana O'Brien
The Entire Cast and Crew

BENEDICTION

Jeff Carlson

***Following Worship, all are invited for brunch in the gym!
See below for more details.***

DIRECTOR'S NOTE FROM JANA O'BRIEN

To most residents of our Chicagoland region, the month of January is just no fun.

Thank heaven that, for the past 45 years, Saint Pauls' annual Bible Off Broadway (nee Bible Story Theater) tradition has made January enormous fun for generations of beloved kids and our many onstage adult leaders and behind-the-scenes volunteers.

We are deeply grateful to the parents who made the effort on January Sundays to get their kids to early morning rehearsals – even when the wind chill was hovering around -15° or the snow was nearly a foot deep.

We are grateful to the St. Pauls pastors, maintenance and office staff, and Council leadership for providing us the space, time, coffee and water, room set-up, materials, and financial resources to put the program together in just four short weeks.

Of course, we are grateful to our church's talented, enthusiastic, energetic, and dedicated youth from age 3 to 18 – both those in front of and behind the scenes!

On a personal level, I am infinitely grateful to our creative, collaborative, talented, and faithful BOB leadership team and many adult volunteers for generously donating their ingenious ideas, time, talent, and good humor to this lightning-speed annual endeavor.

Finally, as we launch Phase II of our *"Expand and Elevate Our Openness"* Capital Campaign fundraising, we are grateful to the generous donors who – in addition to funding our beautiful new lobby, accessible washroom suite, and upgraded electricity capacity and safety – funded an access ramp to our sanctuary chancel/choir level so that anyone of any physical ability now can be a part of our Bible Off Broadway cast.

We therefore dedicate this year's Bible Off Broadway production to the many beloved late or formerly active members of our church who, due to their physical encumbrances, undoubtedly would be so grateful that we are moving forward with Phase II of our accessibility and courtyard project: Del Arsenault, Virginia Barnett, Sandra Benedict, Darlene Braun, Orion Cowie, Gordon Fishburn, Colleen Henry, Carol Knuti, Lisa Cornwell McCroskey, Dolores Pifer, Evelyn Rosebrock, Wes Salsbury, Betty Voice, and countless others from across our 180-year history. May our recollections of these "Saint Pauls saints" – and the many others with us who will benefit now and in the future – inspire our campaign's success as we live out our commitment of welcome and openness to all, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.

PEACE CANDLE - We have added a peace candle to the Chancel. Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God. Please pray for peace daily for all the current wars raging in the world and in our hearts.

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

- Childcare is available for babies and toddlers up to age 5 during worship from 10 to 11 a.m. downstairs in the Nursery and Toddler Room. Activity “busy bags” are available in the Narthex for children to use during the service.
- SUNDAY SCHOOL and CONFIRMATION classes are on hold during Bible Off Broadway rehearsals and presentation. All children are encouraged to participate.
- High School Sunday School class meets on the first and third Sundays of the month. Remaining winter dates are: February 4, 18; March 3 and 17. High schoolers meet immediately following the service downstairs in the Youth Lounge. Parents and teens should join the High School GroupMe for up-to-date information.

TODAY’S WORSHIP LEADERS

Clergy: Matt Fitzgerald, Liz Nickerson, Jeff Carlson

St. Arbucks Quartet: Brendan Henry, piano; Alex Austin, bass; Matt Plaskota, drums; Kris Hansen, trumpet & vocals

Lay Liturgical Administrator: Kevin O’Brien

Head Usher: David Baker

Ushers: Doug Clark, David Faulkner, Fred Pearson

Gatekeeper: Dodd Brown

Camera Operators: Jim Alrutz, Marie Ankenman, Bob Ball, Brian Hafner

Custodian: Ramiro Gonzalez

The flowers on the altar celebrate the incredible talents of the youth of Saint Pauls Church, as displayed in today's Bible Off Broadway presentation. We also celebrate the parents for their extra effort in enabling their kids to participate.

BORN THIS WEEK IN FEBRUARY

We give thanks for your life at St. Pauls. A perfect way to celebrate is by giving one dollar for each year of your life to our Birthday Fund, which supports A Just Harvest.

FEB. 4 Alex Pafenoff, Marcia Knudson,

FEB. 5 Emma Peterson, Kathleen Truskey

FEB. 6 Ivy Sanz, James Weimer, José Cruz Rivera, Rebecca Sandoval, Sarah Leeper

FEB. 7 Aaron Fangman, Kilian Zindel, Nolan Tavas

FEB. 8 Ethan Frisch, Sherrie Myers

FEB. 9 Bruce Reider

FEB. 10 Becky Kornick, Cameron Rogers, Jack Sancya, Jan Bail, Melinda Schimpf

UPCOMING EVENTS

TODAY - BIBLE OFF BROADWAY – AND STAY FOR BRUNCH AFTERWARDS! -

Immediately after worship today, the entire congregation and our visitors are invited to a delicious brunch in the gym catered by the Hearty Boys to celebrate our youth and debut the *“Expand and Elevate Our Openness”* Capital Campaign video. This brunch event will celebrate the launch of Phase II of the church accessibility and courtyard renovation fundraising campaign, which is slated to run through April 30. Don't miss either of these inspirational and transformational St. Pauls events! All are welcome!

Deep thanks to Lorne Frank and our volunteer team for managing this brunch event. And we extend gratitude to Lynn Dykstra Davis for the use of her beautiful quilt collection to serve as window shades and sound buffers for the video presentation.

FEB. 5 and 19 - YOUNG ADULTS PICKLEBALL - 7 p.m., Gym

Come meet new people and have some fun. This is a group for folks in their twenties and thirties. Email us at youngadults@spucc.org.

FEB. 7 - NEW WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY HAS BEGUN - 12 p.m., Zoom

We're studying the Gospel of Mark through the season of Lent. This fast-paced Gospel is thought to be the first one written. Join our often lively discussion as we explore the meaning of the good news of Jesus from Mark. Meets weekly at noon through March 27. To sign up, email Pastor Jeff, jcarlson@spucc.org.

FEB. 9 - ST. PAULS SOCIAL WHISKEY TASTING - 7 p.m., Parlor

Join St. Pauls Social and host Todd Coe for a whiskey tasting. Todd will walk us through the sights, smells and tastes of several different whiskies and discuss what to look for when shopping for a bottle of your own. Please bring a snack to share. A donation of \$10 is requested to cover the costs of the samples. Please RSVP by Friday, February 2 at <http://tinyurl.com/4d3pvdvy>. The event is limited to the first 20 attendees.

FEB. 11 - NEW MEMBER CLASS - 11:30 a.m., Oscar Mayer Room

Join pastors and others curious about St. Pauls for an upcoming New Member Class. Together we'll talk about faith and our community, and we'd love for you to be part of the conversation! We'll meet after worship with lunch provided, and childcare will be provided as needed (please let us know in your registration). New members will join in worship on February 25. Sign up here: <http://tinyurl.com/b9kyn7fy>.

FEB. 18 - MOMS' GROUP - 11:15 -12:30 p.m., Youth Lounge - gather with other moms with newborns through 10-year-olds to support each other! Each month will have a helpful theme for us to explore so we can become the best moms possible and form a tight-knit community. Free childcare provided. Contact Pastor Liz at lnickerson@spucc.org.

FEB. 20 - C.S. LEWIS IN A YEAR BEGINS - 7 p.m., Zoom

In 2024, Saint Pauls is going to read "C.S. Lewis in a Year." Led by Pastor Jeff and Pastor Matt, alternating between the seven novels in *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Lewis's five most acclaimed works of theology. Beginning February 20, we will meet over Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month. Reading C.S. Lewis with church friends will impact your life and your faith profoundly. His work is imaginative and exciting. He explains Christian concepts and God's goodness as clearly as any writer ever has. Start reading now for our first discussion: *Mere Christianity*; a complete reading list will be shared upon registration. Join this exciting adventure by registering here: <http://tinyurl.com/bdzda6u7>.

FEB. 25 - PRE-ANNUAL MEETING BUDGET REVIEW -11 a.m., Comet Room

The pre-annual budget review will be Sunday, February 25, in the Comet Room (across from Social Hall entrance) after worship. It is a deeper dive into St. Pauls finances. Treasurer Sally Fletcher and the Finance Committee will be on hand to present and answer your questions.

FEB. 27 - FOOD FOR THE SOUL LUNCH GROUP -12-1:30 p.m., Gym

Prayer Labyrinth (walking or finger labyrinth) facilitated by Pastor Liz Nickerson. Join us for this special spiritual event. Sponsored by St. Pauls Social, adults of all ages are invited. Make new friends and connect with old ones with lunch (bring your own lunch), fellowship, fun, and faith. You may register here:tinyurl.com/mpfevw33.

FEB. 28 - COOKIES FOR A CAUSE - 5:30 p.m., Kitchen

Join St. Pauls cookie bakers for dinner, socializing and cookie making on Wednesday, February 28. Meet us in the kitchen at 5:30 p.m., or whenever it works for you. We eat around 6:30 p.m. Our cookies (more than 1,000) go to A Just Harvest and their various shelters, as well as the Lincoln Park Community Shelter (LPCS). If you can't join us but would like to participate, you may drop off any homemade cookies labeled MARCIA at the church by February 28. Please contact Marcia Volk at marcia@volkonline.com or (773) 307-6866 to reserve a spot or to inquire about dinner/baking supplies that might be needed. Friends and family are welcome. We're a friendly group and have a good time making "cookies for a cause."

JUNE 8 - 15 - YOUTH MISSION TRIP

Learn to "Be the Neighbor" From Leaders on Race and Reconciliation

We are excited to invite our youth on the summer 2024 trip - a Tulsa Race and Reconciliation Week June 8-15. This will be our second experience with youth service and learning between the UCC and the Disciples of Christ in a nationwide program called "Be the Neighbor."

Tulsa Race and Reconciliation weeks are centered around a justice-focused biblical curriculum based on Luke and Matthew. Youth will have opportunities to serve with local ministries and social service organizations. Drawing from Tulsa's history of racial violence in the Trail of Tears and the burning of "Black Wall Street," youth will learn from activists and church leaders who are determined to find hope and seek reconciliation and growth rather than simply lamenting the past. Youth will look back at the history of racism to understand why and how to address racism today and into the future. Youth will learn about types of racism, differences between equity and equality, and the racial wealth gap. Lessons learned will be brought home and put to work at St. Pauls and in Chicago. Register here: tinyurl.com/2024-youth-mission-trip.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOLDER PICK- UP

The fundraising campaign for Phase II of our "Campaign to Expand and Elevate Our Openness at Saint Pauls" accessibility and courtyard project is underway! Please be sure to pick up your campaign information folder in the Narthex. Envelopes are alphabetized in labeled boxes; if you don't find one, put your name on the list and we will get one to you. The folders will provide details about the campaign and how to pledge your support. Save us the cost of postage by picking up your folder so every dollar we raise can be put into bricks, mortar and an elevator!

WINDY CITY WINDS CONCERT – FRIDAY MARCH 8 – A EUROPEAN TOUR

Windy City Winds, "Chicago's Community Band," invites you to our winter concert, *A European Tour*, in our Sanctuary at 7:30 p.m. on Friday evening, March 8. Our guest soloist will be world-famous Chicago Symphony Orchestra Assistant Principal Clarinetist John Bruce Yeh performing works by Weber and Debussy. The concert will feature music from Spain, Greece, Germany, France, Ireland, and Italy. Admission is free and the concert will be live streamed. Audience members can participate in WCW's annual raffle for valuable prizes.

JOIN OUR INTERGENERATIONAL ORCHESTRA

Do you play an orchestral string, woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument? If so, please join the St. Pauls UCC Intergenerational Orchestra as we prepare to perform in worship on Sunday, March 3. Orchestra members include pre-teens, teenagers and adults of all ages and abilities! Rehearsals are immediately after worship for about an hour in the Oscar Mayer Room on February 11, 18 and 25. If you are interested, please contact our conductor Mark Mosley at (773) 732-0625 or mwmosley@gmail.com. Please join us as together we *Make a Joyful Sound in the City!*

FAITH IN ACTION MESSAGING GROUP

Some people call it showing up for a protest or marching against a government policy. Others call it public witnessing for the values inherent in our faith. Most of us appreciate being able to do both with like-minded members of our congregation. Members and friends of St. Pauls can join this group. If you'd like to receive advance email notice of such protests, gatherings or advocacy opportunities – frequently on short notice due to swift governmental action - or to invite others in the group to join you in an advocacy opportunity, join Faith in Action. Register here: <http://tinyurl.com/wuphf495>.

A MUSICAL GIFT FOR YOU!

Our own St. Arbucks Quartet recorded an album, *Mid-Winter Gifts*, in February 2022 featuring music they have played during our worship services. It is available FREE to you and everyone online. Here is a link to the album on Spotify:

<http://tinyurl.com/bdcpvedv>.

And here is a link to the same album on Apple Music: <http://tinyurl.com/39skfy9k>.

It is exactly the same music on both sites, simply choose your preferred platform.

Please feel free to share these links with your friends. You do not need a Spotify or Apple Music account to listen.

USE OF CHURCH REVENUE TASK FORCE

We are looking to increase the funds the church receives from building rentals and use fees for events. We need your talent and creative ideas and are looking for people to serve on this task force to devise a plan. Interested? Contact Larry Damron at lawerencedamron@gmail.com.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT - provided by SPARC

Our partners at Community Renewal Society (CRS) work every day to fight for justice and equality and become a region free of race and class barriers. On January 15, they hosted their **2024 Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Faith in Action Assembly**. A panel of diverse speakers connected King's prophetic wisdom and legacy to the challenges we face today throughout the Chicago region and the ways in which CRS is addressing them. Read the Assembly recap at tinyurl.com/224np7aw and follow its links to be inspired for the work still ahead to build a just and loving society.

CREATION CORNER - provided by Green Team

No Better Time to Plan a Garden

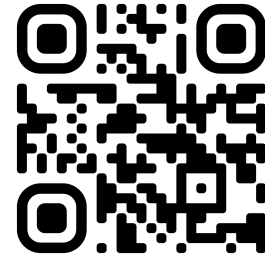
There are still challenging weather days ahead. This is an excellent time to begin planning a garden from seeds, cuttings or vegetable roots you might have at home. If possible, choose seeds or plants that are organic and suited for local growing conditions. Even if you do not have garden space, a pot for growing herbs and edible flowers, such as nasturtiums, will work and give your soul, soups and salads a boost.

If you are not able or interested in gardening at home, then consider a CSA box (Community Supported Agriculture box). Its contents will keep you in tune with the seasons while supporting local farmers.

PLEDGING & GIVING INFORMATION

PLEDGE WITH BOLD GRATITUDE FOR 2024

Thank you to everyone who has already made a pledge for 2024! Your generous support of St. Pauls is greatly needed and much appreciated. If you have yet to pledge your time, talents or treasures for 2024, you can fill out a paper pledge form and put it in the offering tray or return it to the office. Or, you can pledge online at spucc.org/pledge or by scanning this QR code.



Making a pledge shares with us your intention to donate your time, talents and financial support. This information helps us plan and budget for the upcoming year.

Important Note: If your pledged financial support for 2024 is changing from this year, and you have a current recurring donation set up through one of our donation options, please adjust your recurring donation accordingly. Pledge forms do not authorize St. Pauls to create or update recurring donations. Email bookkeeper@spucc.org with questions or for help.

IRA QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS

If you have an IRA and are required, or will be required, to take a minimum annual distribution (RMD) from your account, you may be interested to know that there are tax advantages to taking your distribution as a direct contribution to a charitable organization such as St. Pauls.

If the distribution is made directly from your IRA to St. Pauls, then you enjoy two tax benefits: 1) the distribution does not count as taxable income and 2) the distribution does count towards satisfying your RMD if over age 73. The gift, called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), must go directly from your IRA to the organization, and your total gifts cannot exceed \$100,000 per year. You can make QCDs after you reach age 70 ½, which is earlier than the current RMD age of 73. You cannot make QCDs from your 401K; it has to be rolled into an IRA first.

With the 2017 changes in the tax law, some have lost the ability to itemize their deductions, including charitable contributions, and are now taking the higher standard deduction. Making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a great way to still get a tax benefit for charitable giving. If you have questions about QCDs, consult your tax or financial advisor. Members of the Finance Committee are able to provide more information as well. Reach out to Committee chair Sally Fletcher at Treasurer@SPUCC.org.

GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

ACTIVISM & ADVOCACY MINISTRY – Do you have a passion for reaching out to others? The St. Pauls Activism & Advocacy Ministry would love you to join us in keeping our church engaged in community outreach. For more information, contact Jennifer Kew, JenniferLKew@gmail.com, or Pastor Jeff, jcarlson@spucc.org.

BASKETBALL – Join us for a weekly Wednesday 7 p.m. pickup game! All skill levels welcome. Email Pastor Matt to get on the updates list, mfitzgerald@spucc.org.

BIBLE STUDY – Weekly on Wednesdays, noon-1 p.m. All are welcome! Contact Pastor Jeff for the Zoom link, jcarlson@spucc.org.

THE BOOK NOOK – Find your next good read or drop off books to share in the Social Hall. Donations are welcome – just add them to the shelf for “New Arrivals” or leave them on the floor next to the bookcase. We appreciate all genres, including books for kids. Questions, contact Linda Nitzsche, lindanitz@yahoo.com.

CAREGIVERS' GROUP – A caregiving role can be a source of love, joy and considerable stress, but it's easier when it doesn't feel like you're the only one. The St. Pauls Caregivers' Group is an informal support group of people who are responsible for the care of parents, partners, friends, or children with illnesses or disabilities. We gather via Zoom the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 10 to 11 a.m. Contact Pam Woll pamelawoll@sbcglobal.net with questions, or info@spucc.org to be added to the email list.

CHURCH CENTER – spucc.churchcenter.com is our portal for St. Pauls members and friends. See our calendar, register for events, update your information, join our photo directory, manage your online donations, see your giving history, and more!

CHURCH SCHOOL – God created us to be creative and to create! This is our theme for Church School this year. Each child will learn that they were created in God's own image. They will learn to love and value all people and to love themselves. Please fill out the one-time registration for the '23-'24 school year below. We have a nursery for children under 2, Preschool Child Care for children 2-5, and Sunday School/Confirmation I & II for 5-year-olds to high school. Email questions to Children's Program Coordinator Danielle Mayfield at danielle.mayfield@spucc.org. Register here: spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1850397.

CONNECTORS reach out providing networking and support for members and friends of St. Pauls. Membership is open to all who have the time and the inclination to help. Contact Marcia Volk at marcia@volkonline.com.

EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM & CARDS – Follow this link for additional information: spucc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/178271.

GREEN TEAM – As people of faith, members of St. Pauls are called to “Care for Creation.” To that end, the Green Team is seeking new members, particularly young adults and youth, as we become a Creation Justice church recognized by the UCC. We would love to have you! If you are interested, please contact either of the new interim Green Team co-chairs, Ninon Freeman at nlanda05@yahoo.com or Rick Peterson at rnpeterson2017@gmail.com.

“HEALING HEARTS” PET SUPPORT GROUP: ST PAULS PET LOSS COMMUNITY

Are you struggling with losing a beloved furry friend/companion/animal assistant? Losing a pet can be one of the most heart-wrenching experiences in life. At St Pauls, we understand the deep bond you shared with your beloved pet/family member, and we're here to offer support, understanding, and a virtual shoulder to lean on. To join, visit: tinyurl.com/healing-hearts-support. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 7-8 p.m. Age 18+ only, 15 participants maximum.

HANDWORK MEET-UP – If you enjoy handwork, you're invited to sit together and stitch in community on the first Sunday of the month at our drop-in handwork group. We gather in a corner of the Social Hall for one hour after the worship service. New to handwork? We have expert knitters, crocheters, embroiderers, and sewers to help you get started with a project. We also welcome admirers of handwork should you wish to pull up a chair and join the conversation!

LITTLE LIGHTS is a St. Pauls early childhood program with classes for 2, 3, and 4-year-olds. We have limited spots remaining for the 2023/24 school year. Check out www.littlelightslp.org. If you would like to schedule a tour or have additional questions, contact Little Lights Director Erin Fitzgerald at littlelights@spucc.org.

MOMS' GROUP – Being a mom is the hardest job in the world! So come to the Youth Lounge after worship on the second Sunday of each month to gather with other moms with newborns through 10 years and support each other! Each month will have a helpful theme for us to explore so we can become the best moms possible and form a tight-knit community. Free childcare by trained professionals is available in the church nursery on the south wall of the Social Hall. RSVP at spucc.churchcenter.com/groups/saint-pauls-groups/mom-s-group or contact Pastor Liz at lnickerson@spucc.org.

NEW MEMBER CLASSES – Join pastors, members, and others curious about St. Pauls for an upcoming New Member Class. Together we'll talk about faith and our community, and we'd love for you to be part of the conversation! We'll meet after worship, and childcare will be provided as needed (please let us know in your registration). See upcoming dates here: spucc.org/new_member_classes.

PALESTINE STUDY GROUP

Let's learn together through literature, film and guest speakers. We begin with the book, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* by Rashid Khalidi. The book is available at tinyurl.com/4e6dacz7. Khalidi, a Palestinian American professor at Columbia University, is one of the foremost historians on the Middle East. This book offers a necessary reframing of the current crisis in Gaza, and illuminates paths not taken to a just peace. First discussion via Zoom Tuesday, February 27 at 7 p.m. All are welcome! To sign up, visit: tinyurl.com/Palestine-Study-Group. Contact David Burnett at burnett.db@gmail.com with questions.

PICKLEBALL – Have you tried the growing sport of Pickleball yet? We hold pick-up games in the St. Pauls gym every week. Sign up at the Church Center link below and show up at one of the allotted times! All skill levels are invited. If you have questions, call or text Steve Garrett at (312) 208-0636. Game Time: Tuesdays: 5:30-8:30 p.m. To join us, visit: tinyurl.com/Tuesday-Pickleball.

RETIREMENT GROUP – The Retirement Group meets at 10 a.m. in the Parlor on the third Tuesday of the month. Please join us to discuss our transition paths, ways we found ourselves here, what's meaningful, and what's next with or without planned health, funds or companionship. For more info, contact Marcia Knudson at marciaknudson@gmail.com.

ST. PAULS SOCIAL – Get better acquainted with other adults at St. Pauls. If you are interested in hosting, please contact Jen Luerssen at jenluerssen@yahoo.com. Subscribe to the distribution list below, or look out for future events in the bulletin calendar: spucc.churchcenter.com/groups/saint-pauls-groups/st-pauls-social.

SPARC (St. Pauls Anti-Racism Cluster) meets monthly to discern how we as a congregation can answer the call to live our faith in an age of injustice. We invite you to join us in identifying the educational opportunities, resources and actions to take on our journey toward racial justice. To participate or share your ideas, contact Cindy Ball at cindyball11@gmail.com.

STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. PAULS – If you're in need of support through a tough time and would like to be matched with someone who would support you with companionship and prayer, or you're feeling called to offer support, speak to Pastor Jeff Carlson (jcarlson@spucc.org), Marti Pechnyo (mpechnyo@gmail.com), or Barb Kaiser (bkaiser2213@gmail.com).

UCC DAILY DEVOTIONAL PRAYER GUIDE – Every day there is a scripture passage and reflection that you can sign up to receive in your inbox! This is a great way to make time to reflect on God each day and grow in your faith. To sign-up, visit ucc.org/daily-devotional.



YOUNG ADULTS – A group for fun and fellowship for folks in their twenties and thirties. Join our GroupMe group with the QR code or email us at youngadults@spucc.org.

YOUTH & FAMILY NEWSLETTER – Make sure you stay in the know with youth events! A weekly email is sent to parents to share activities, including Sunday School lessons and other useful news. Please contact Erin Fitzgerald at erin.fitzgerald@spucc.org to be added to the list.

YOUTH CHOIRS – If your child has any interest in music, please join us! Kecia Waldschmidt is leading Paul's People for 4th-8th graders. Breanna Coe and Karen Johnson are leading the Children's Choir for kids K-3rd grade. Rehearsals are 9:30 on Sunday mornings during the school year.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

ALTAR FLOWERS – Providing flowers for the altar is an excellent way to celebrate a special event in your life: an anniversary, a birthday, a holiday, or just because you like flowers. Sign up here: tinyurl.com/alter-flowers-2024.

COMMON PANTRY COMMUNION SUNDAYS – We're collecting food for the Common Pantry every communion Sunday - usually the first Sunday of the month. See their wish list for most-needed items here: commonpantry.org/donations. Modest sized products are best for distribution (e.g., a few 24 oz. containers of cooking oil are preferable to a 64 oz. container). Leave items in the Narthex bin.

CALL FOR LIVE STREAM VOLUNTEERS – Love all things digital, especially fancy devices? Got a knack for capturing special moments on camera? Love to chat with family, friends and others? Want to contribute to a key outreach effort of St. Pauls? If you answered yes to any of the above questions, the St. Pauls Streaming Team needs you. Our team is expanding its mission and can use your help. If interested, come see us in the balcony after the service or reach out to Brian Hafner (bhafner2@att.net) or Bob Ball (Robert.f.ball@outlook.com).

CONSIDER THE LILIES – Are you looking for a way to get involved with the life of St. Pauls? Join the team that delivers our Sunday altar flowers to members and friends who need to know St. Pauls is thinking of them. The flower ministry is flexible and meant to be an easy and rewarding experience. Team members sign up for approximately one Sunday every three months. It is amazing how this simple gesture brings such joy and feelings of love to the recipient – not to mention the joy and love experienced by the deliverer. If you would like to be part of this ministry, please email lilies@spucc.org or register here: <http://tinyurl.com/team-lilies>.

DRIVERS/TRANSPORTATION AIDES NEEDED FOR OLDER ADULTS – We are looking for volunteers to drive some older adults to church and accompany one of our congregants to church on Sunday mornings on the Pace bus round trip from their nursing facility. This is a great way for you to make a real difference for a fellow member. For questions or more information, please contact Pastor Liz at lnickerson@spucc.org.

GREETING TEAM – Would you consider being one of our Sunday morning greeters? Arrive at 9:30 a.m. and meet with ushers in the Narthex for quick announcements and a prayer. Then stand at the church doors and say “Hello” to attendees, greeting them with a smile, warm welcome and cheerfulness. The ushers are inside continuing to welcome attendees and distribute worship bulletins. Sign up here: <https://spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2003286>.

LPCS VOLUNTEERING – Lincoln Park Community Services has a new volunteer opportunity on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., or 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. You will prepare LPCS-provided lunches for their street outreach program and welcome folks coming for drop-in services. To learn more about this program, contact volunteer coordinator Lynne Brenan at lynnebrenan@yahoo.com or (630) 542-7012. Learn more here: tinyurl.com/4sfbcmpx.

POP TAB PROGRAM: RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITY – Help support the Ronald McDonald Charities by saving aluminum tabs from all kinds of cans: soda, canned foods, pet food, etc. Find a container and start collecting. Bring your pop tab donations to the Social Hall and add them to our collection bin. This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce young children to helping others and recycling. Little things like pop tabs can make a big difference!

SCRIPTURE READER VOLUNTEERS – Volunteers are needed for the 10 a.m. in-person worship service each week to read the scripture passage of the day. Learn more and sign up here: spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1967800.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

For St. Pauls-sponsored events, send to info@spucc.org by 10 a.m. on Wednesdays for publication in the Friday email and next Sunday bulletin. Share personal announcements/ events on our Facebook Group, St. Pauls Together. **Please limit announcements to 100 words**. Thank you!

TODAY'S MUSIC

For a listing of all of the Bible Off Broadway song titles, composers, and the original and special BOB lyric writers, including the special lyrics themselves, as well as the complete cast and crew, please see the special program insert printed on color paper.

Sheep May Safely Graze (*Schafe können sicher weiden*) was originally composed by Johann Sebastian Bach as a soprano aria with words by Salomon Franck. Written in 1713, the piece is part of the cantata "*Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd*," BWV 208 ("*Only the lively hunt pleases me*"). (Source: Wikipedia)

I Love to Tell the Story is a traditional hymn by Kate Hankey (1834-1911), with a refrain by William G. Fischer (1835-1912). Arabella Katherine Hankey was the daughter of a wealthy banker and was associated with the Anglican Clapham sect of William Wilberforce. This group helped establish the British and Foreign Bible Society, promoted the abolition of slavery, and was involved in improving the lot of England's working classes. As a youth, refrain composer William G. Fischer developed an interest in music while attending singing schools. His career included working in the Philadelphia book bindery of J. B. Lippincott Publishing Company, teaching music at Girard College, and co-owning a piano business and music store. Fischer eventually became a popular director of music at revival meetings and choral festivals. (Source: Hymnary.org)

SPECIAL MUSIC 2023-2024
"MASS APPEAL"

Once again, there is a theme for special music during the 2023-2024 season offered by our Chancel Choir during our 10 a.m. Sunday morning worship services. Please add these remaining dates to your calendar and please invite your friends to join us in person or online at spucc.org/streaming.

Mass Appeal is a way to look at one of the oldest forms of Christian liturgical worship in three very different ways. The goal is to share how the words of the liturgical Mass can be expressed in varied musical styles but always with the same goal: expressing the spiritual joy, longing, majesty, and supplication.

Sunday, March 17, 2024 - *Messe solennelle* by Louis Vierne. This French Romantic setting in Latin was composed for choir and organ in 1899. It showcases beautiful and majestic writing for both choir and a pipe organ with the breadth of colors available on our Phoenix and the talents of Kevin Dzierzawski.

Sunday, May 19, 2024 - *A Gospel Mass* was composed in 1982 by Robert Ray. This wonderful setting, largely in English, marries the spiritual energy and uplift of Gospel music with the timeless words of the Mass ordinary. This gives us a chance to showcase not only the Chancel Choir, but also our incredible St. Arbucks Quartet.

ST. PAULS PRAYS

Please clip this page and pray for those who are named below. To have your prayer request included, simply ask a pastor in person, on the phone or by email.

Our practice is to run each prayer request for four weeks and then remove it.

If you would like to continue a prayer request after four weeks, let a pastor know.

- Jill Minetz and family at the death of her brother Arthur Scott Aronson.
- Prayers for peace - in our city, nation and world.
- Betty Voice being treated for sepsis.
- Family and friends of Karen Rieck at her death.
- David Sr., father of David Faulkner, who is dealing with cardiac and dehydration health concerns.
- Deborah's friend Anita Smith recovering at Paul House and Health Care Center following a lengthy hospitalization.
- Pat Kirby, hospitalized for tests.
- Family and friends of Mike Perricone at his death, especially for his wife Joan Vanderbeck and daughter Jenny.
- Liz Kurman recovering from elbow surgery
- Sister-in-law of Gloria Joseph, dealing with a cancer diagnosis.
- Leslie, sister of Mary Stainton, diagnosed with a brain tumor.
- Students and staff of the GCE school in Chicago, which recently closed.
- Leeanne Tongue.
- Debra and Robin at the death of their son Sean.
- For Laura at the recent death of her mother and the paralysis of her son Ryan in an accident. Pray for Ryan too as he struggles to regain some function and mobility.
- Leroy Johnson, husband of Karen L. Johnson, diagnosed with acute leukemia.
- New member Irem Metin, who is recovering from surgery. Please keep Irem, her husband William, and sons Aidan and Benjamin in your prayers.
- Carole Crowley, recovering from a stroke.

Prayer, Support, Mental Health Resources

Even when you walk through the valley of shadows, God is with you. Help is available for every kind of issue. Contact one of the pastors today for support, referrals, and information that can help you and your loved ones.

ABOUT ST. PAULS

Making a Joyful Sound in the City!

St. Pauls UCC has a vibrant history in the city of Chicago. Founded in 1843, we are one of the city's oldest churches. In 1989, we became one of America's first congregations to declare ourselves "Open and Affirming" of LGBTQ+ people.

From founding Chicago's largest provider of social services to at-risk children to starting a home for the elderly, from housing protestors at the 1968 Democratic Convention to hosting Lincoln Park's first MLK day march against violence on Chicago's streets, we are proud to make a joyful sound in the city.

Most important, during the past 180 years we are glad to have introduced thousands of children and adults to the amazing, inclusive, life changing, uplifting love of God. We do so in worship that is traditional, but far from conventional.

Senior Pastor Matt Fitzgerald, mfitzgerald@spucc.org
Associate Pastor Jeff Carlson, jcarlson@spucc.org
Associate Pastor Liz Nickerson, lnickerson@spucc.org

For a complete list of St. Pauls Staff, Governance, and Lay Leadership
Please visit www.spucc.org/contact

St. Pauls United Church of Christ
2335 N Orchard St. | Chicago, IL 60614
(773) 348-3829 www.spucc.org

Free Parking is available Sundays from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
at the Lincoln Common Parking Garage, 2316 N. Lincoln Ave.
Parking validation is available in the Narthex.



WELCOME TO SAINT PAULS UCC!

Welcome to those whose hearts are on fire with faith,
and to those who bring their doubt inside our doors.

Welcome to our first time guests and
our longtime members.

Welcome to single people, tiny children,
grandparents and families of all configurations.

Welcome to those who rejoice and to those who grieve.

Welcome to LGBTQ+ people.

Welcome to each and to everyone.

We are blessed by your presence and
we are glad you are here.